

**Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)**

The Examiner cites the Masucci patent as anticipating claims 1, 2, 4, and 7-12. The Masucci patent was filed on October 22, 1999. This patent application was filed on September 27, 2000 and claims priority to a provisional application with a filing date of September 27, 1999. September 27, 1999 predates the filing of the Masucci patent and therefore the Masucci patent cannot anticipate this patent application under 35 U.S.C. §§102(e).

Since this patent application antedates the reference, these claims are in a condition for allowance.

**Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

The Examiner states that Claims 3, 5, and 6 are rejected as being unpatentable over Masucci. The Masucci patent was filed on October 22, 1999. This patent application was filed on September 27, 2000 and claims priority to a provisional application with a filing date of September 27, 1999. September 27, 1999 predates the filing of the Masucci patent and therefore the Masucci patent cannot anticipate this patent application under 35 U.S.C. §§102(e).

Since this patent application antedates the reference, it would not have been obvious to use WDM to combine signals of different wavelengths into a common optical line. Additionally, it would not have been obvious to use buffers for selectively buffering output data. Accordingly, these claims are in a condition for allowance.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

Applicants note with appreciation Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

**CONCLUSION**

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims in view of the remarks made herein. In view of the remarks made above, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully solicited. Should the examiner be interested, Applicants respectfully request a telephone interview to discuss whatever additional questions or comments the examiner may have.

Respectfully submitted,

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